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"Even the drum seems to be regarded as in some degree the property of the whole community, though it may be made by the labour of a single individual. There was the frame of a drum in the hut of Uloksak when I visited the Coppermine river Eskimos in February, 1915. The natives decided to hold a dance in my honour, and for this purpose the drum was repaired. Uloksak supplied the membrane of caribou skin, and four of the natives fastened it over the frame. The drum was always kept in Uloksak's house, and carried on his sled during migrations; but it was at anyone's disposal for a dance, and there would have been much ill-feeling if Uloksak had refused to hand it over."

"The only musical instrument they possess is the tambourine or drum, kilaun. Children, and even adults at times, frequently produce a scale of notes by flipping their finger-nails in succession against their upper incisors, beginning with the little finger. There can of course be no fixed intervals in their scale, but different notes are made by the different fingers, through modifications probably of the cavity of the mouth, though the movement is difficult to detect.

The drum is merely a circular wooden hoop with a membrane of deerskin stretched over it. One that the Coppermine river natives were using in the winter of 1914-15 was made of poplar obtained near Great Bear lake. The flat lath had been curved round to a rough oval, and the overlapping ends riveted with iron nails. The rim was 7 cm. wide and 2 cm. thick, and the two inside diameters were 85.5 and 77 cm. The handle was a short stout piece of poplar 16 cm. long without any ornamentation; it was notched at one end to fit the rim, to which it was lashed with strands of plaited sinew. The membrane was simply a scraped caribou skin lashed around the rim with cod-line. A new membrane was fitted on during my visit. Three men held the skin taut over the frame while a fourth drew tight the lashings. The edge of the membrane where it protruded below the lashing was wound round a stick, and levered down so that the parchment was stretched still tighter. One [223] or two small holes in the skin were left unpatched, as the drum when tested proved to be sufficiently resonant. The Eskimos

never tune their drums to any particular note, but if they show sings [sic] of slackness and loss of resonance they rub a little water over the surface. The drum-stick is an ordinary heavy baton, perfectly plain; the one used by the Coppermine natives was 33 cm. long. The Eskimos often cover it with seal-skin where it strikes the rim; for the musician, who holds the drum above his head, strikes not the parchment, but the wooden rim on its under side, first on one side of the handle, then on the other."

524 321 Stefansson[1] has illustrated a specimen made from the scapula of a seal. This is a common type in north Alaska and in Mackenzie River basin, but I never saw it among the Copper Eskimo. Either it was extremely rare there, or its ascription to Coronation Gulf is a mistake.

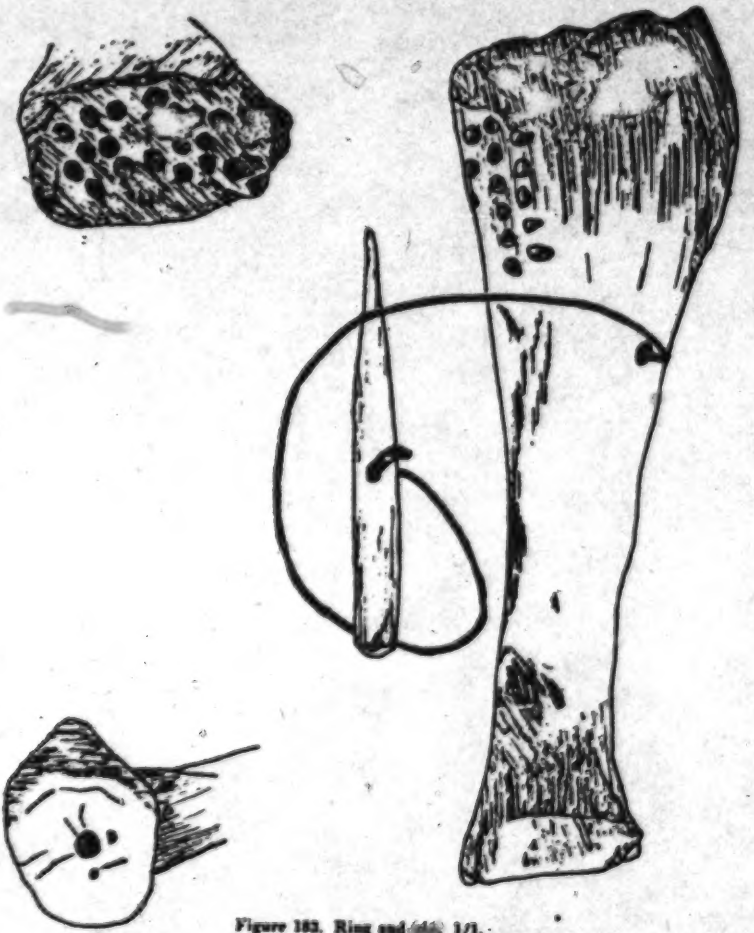

Figure 183. Ring and [illegible] 1/1.

524 534 *Bull-roarer.* This was an uncommon toy, used only by children. I saw only one specimen in 2 years (Figure 184), and that was small and crudely made. The deep notch in the base suggests the bifid tail of a fish.

534 *Drums.* The Copper Eskimo drum or tambourine was much larger and heavier than that used in the western Arctic, and the drumstick a short, heavy baton instead of a slender wand. Any wood that could be bent into a hoop

[1] Stefansson, op. cit., fig. 91, p. 123.

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Figure 184. Bull-roarer. IV.D.462. Approx. 1/2.

Any wood that could be bent into a hoop served for the frame; actually the choice was limited to spruce and poplar, the preference being for poplar. Dehaired caribou skin formed the membrane; it was kept taut by a cord that ran in a groove around the rim. The handle was a piece of wood notched to fit the edge of the rim and secured by lashing; in no case that I observed was it riveted to the rim or embellished with any carving. The fore end of the drumstick, which was struck on the rim, was

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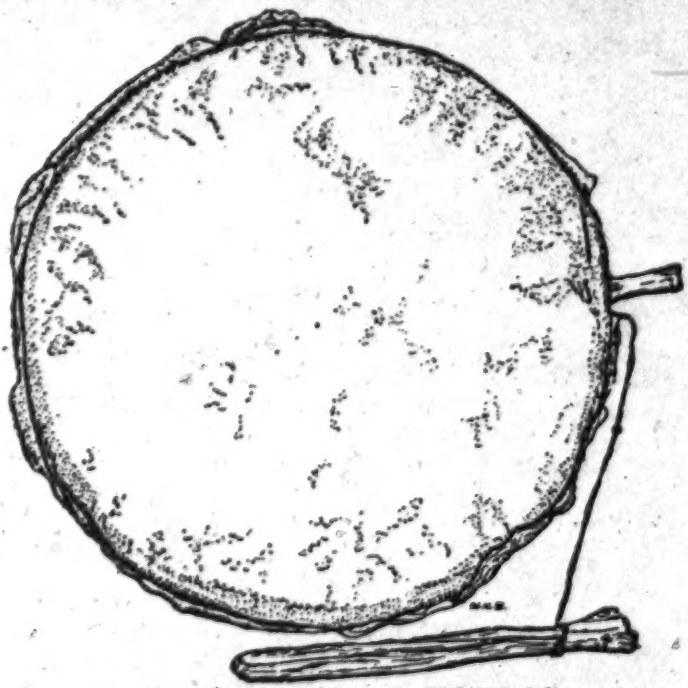

Figure 185. Drum and drumstick. IV.D.1644. 1/5.

usually covered with seal or caribou skin. The drum illustrated in Figure 185 has a maximum diameter of 18 inches. Detailed measurements of another drum are given in Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, vol. XII, page 222.

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[826] There was one drum, on the average, to every eight or ten families. The maker was also the owner; he kept it inside his house and carried it on his sled. The whole community, however, shared its possession and any man might borrow it at will.

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Figure 186. Doll, of skin. IV.B.787. 1/2.

[868] *Dolls.* We may perhaps class dolls with the playthings, although the cutting out and sewing of costumes for them was a regular part of girls' education. I cannot remember that any had wooden faces; all that I recall were entirely of skin, from 6 inches to a foot long, and clothed as females, which was perhaps only natural, as the women's costume required rather more skill in tailoring than the men's. Figure 186 shows a typical specimen.

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[361] of the bay, where a band of children were rolling hoops along the ice of the foreshore. "White man, white man," my companions shouted as they ran. The villagers poured out of their houses and crowded around me, men jostling women, and women pushing aside men, in their eagerness to scan my face and tell me their names. At the last came a tall, dignified man of about middle age who warmly seized my arm and [352] invited me to enter his hut. When I crawled in behind him he set me in the place of honour at the back of the sleeping-platform, dusted the snow from my shoes, and seated himself in front at my feet.

My guide had relatives in this village with whom he proposed to spend the night; but I had many notes to write and desired a separate snow-hut where I could be quiet and undisturbed. The Eskimos gladly built one for me while I unharnessed and fed the dogs; and they vied with each other in unloading the sled, hoping to catch a glimpse of my trade goods. Some stayed to share my supper, boiled rice seasoned with sugar and canned milk; and it was amusing to watch their faces as each in turn swallowed a spoonful of [534] the novel dish. Not all of them shared my own opinion of its excellence, and the discussion that arose about the white man's food might have lasted all night if the distant booming of a drum had not diverted [345] their thoughts and brought about a hasty exodus. The [535] people were holding a dance in my honour, and awaited

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my presence in the dance-house, which was in this village the forecourt of a large two-roomed hut. Seated in state on a sleeping-platform I watched their monotonous performance for two hours; then weariness overcame me, and, slipping through the low doorway, I retired, unattended, to my new home.

Eskimo dances have a superficial resemblance to the open-air meetings of a church army band, except that the only musical instrument is a drum. The singers form a ring around the leader, who hops and prances rhythmically to the accompaniment of a song. As one dancer tires and steps back into the ring, another takes his place. Women and children alternate with the men, for the sexes have almost equal status in this twilight land. Sometimes the faces of the singers glow with such earnestness that even the alien spectator succumbs to the emotional atmosphere and joins in their embryonic religion. Thus with song and dance they while away the evening hours until one after another drops out of the circle and the gathering dissolves to its homes

I measured the heads and statures of the Eskimos from early the next morning until mid-afternoon. Every man who submitted to the operation received a fish-hook, every woman a needle; and the payment seemed to satisfy them all. On completing these measurements I traded for museum specimens, bartering knives, files, and other articles for lamps and pots

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beneath the snow-floor, making the prohibition technically invalid. We cooked our caribou meat with easy consciences, and, when the natives upbraided us, pointed to a tiny patch of gravel exposed beneath our feet. Some accepted our verdict, most of them still disapproved; but by that time they were better acquainted with the strange ways of the white man, and believed that we could do with impunity what they could not attempt without disaster.

The village dance-house formed as usual the forecourt of two snow-huts, which kept it at an even temperature with their two large blubber-lamps. One hut was occupied by Ikpuckhuak, the elderly man who had come to my rescue when his fellow-tribesman tried to carry off my knife. Ikpuckhuak means the "Dirty One"; but the name in no wise reflected on his personal characteristics, for the Eskimos were too familiar with the lack of water during seven months of the year to pay much attention to some of its consequences. Ikpuck, as I shall call him hereafter, was actually cleaner than most of his countrymen, provided one gives the word a rather broad interpretation; and his name was no more than an ancient family title which he inherited in childhood along with his other privileges.

We spent several pleasant evenings on his sleeping-platform, reclining comfortably on caribou robes and listening to the natives in the forecourt singing their

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monotonous songs to the accompaniment of a drum. At times their dances were interspersed with strange religious ceremonies, always fascinating to watch and occasionally difficult to comprehend. They knew nothing of Christianity. Their forefathers had taught them to believe in a goddess dwelling at the bottom of the sea who controlled both the winter storms and the supply of seals. They did not worship her as we understand worship, but they held her in great awe, and often tried to secure her goodwill by persuasion or by threats. Many of their misfortunes were laid directly to her door; others were ascribed to the spirits of the dead, or to the machinations of sorcerers. Their sole defence against these imaginary foes lay in their shamans or medicine-men, who claimed to summon into their bodies powerful spirits of men and animals that had voluntarily placed themselves under human control. The medicine-men were thus the physicians, the prophets, and the priests of their little communities. Speaking as the mouthpieces of their spirits, they elucidated the past and foretold the future; and they sent their protecting spirits to bring back the stolen souls of the sick or to compel the sea-goddess to deliver up the seals she withheld from the starving Eskimos. Yet there were many occasions in life when even they could give no assistance, and the people, realizing this, accepted their fate with the fortitude customary to their race.

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honour. They had built no dance-house, and did not possess a drum; but about thirty squeezed into an ordinary dwelling-house eleven feet in diameter, where they banged my frying-pan and sang at the tops of their voices until the snow-ceiling, melting with the warmth of so many human beings, began to drip ice-cold water on our heads. The din and odour were terrific, more than flesh and blood could endure; so, pushing my way through the crowd, I retired to the purity of the outer air and gradually regained my senses.

We remained in this village one day and two nights while I measured all its adult inhabitants. Seal meat was not plentiful, and a longer stay would have left my dogs without food. Moreover, it was not necessary, for I was now formally introduced to the people, and could study them at my leisure when they joined the other two tribes in the Liston and Sutton Islands at the end of the month.

My party on the return journey was increased by three—Wealthy's cousin, whose wife was already at the island village, and two girls, Mrs. Snow-Knife's sister and another, who were bound on the high-road to matrimony. The brides piled everything they owned on top of my sled, which creaked and groaned under the extra load. Luckily their trousseaux were not as formidable as their white sisters', or we should never have reached our journey's end. The average Eskimo

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Photo by G. H. Wilkins.

Dance-songs were their chronicles of current events.

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